

Love Song at the Olivetti on Fifth Avenue

Look, friends, at the tiny way
violets have in the grass -- those
small blue bulbs that light its green:
windows of the dirt's cathedral,
skylights on the silences
and promises of the earth,
short stars a lawnmower threshes
into little heavens, falling
in the sun.

Come closer, friends;
I won't be long.

By actual count
there are, on any summer's day,
sixty-two zentillion of them
(more than the real stars we see).
Right in our backyards!
our roadsides, friends, our fields and woods!
An incredible resource,
since the dawn of time, these tiny flowers
have set their eyes on us,
from below; but we've been too
involved with wars and kings and things
to see that we can use them --
I mean, not to eat, or wear, or burn
(though a salad would be good
shining with them, or icy-blue whiskey
in glasses tinted with their melted hue,
naked, a fluffy rug of pollen wool
before a hearth, crackling petals
and pungent lights ... Technologists,
now the possibility
is pointed out, may make what they will.
I want no patent rights or royalties.)

Here, somebody hold this sheet. Friends,
I'm nearly through.

My plan is plainer,
to give, simply give them to each other -- handfuls
of blue: cups, buckets, bushels, truckloads.
See them coming to market, mountains
of flowers piled in our streets and squares!
Think of the jobs! Think we could fight
wars with them, at a huge saving --

explosions not only like great flowers
but of a million flowers, showering
foxholes, fronts ... or cities bombed
with their bright flakes, the gay down of love --
and the bombers could stop for tea
before going back; everybody
laughing, talking, kissing in the streets! holding
out blue ...

 Please, somebody
poke that lovely girl who's
yawning (I see her in the glass;
some people won't read anything if it's long).
Friends, I don't stand to make a penny;
I've come up from the country
to give the plan away for free,
like violets, or poems, or cash
(isn't she pretty, eyes like angels!)
so help yourselves (what I'm trying)
it's our world, after all
(to tell her is life is short
and I'll find her a violet and walk
her home hello hello

JJJJJJJJJJ

-- Robert Wallace

Cleveland, Ohio

the speckled trout
in my hand i slit
open to sift out
his guts to eat
him after fire
scorched his
body in the
pan and my
belly

the roots are
my legs, head holes

gather moisture and
nourishment, my flower

spits a seed

-- Steven Richmond

Santa Monica, California